

**Advisory Scientific Committee Organizational Meeting  
April 29, 2004; 10:00 a.m.; State Capitol**

Agenda

- I. Welcome
- II. Introduction of ASC Members
- III. Selection of Chair
- IV. Approval of Meeting Agenda
- V. Discussion of Charges
- VI. Workplan Discussions
- VII. Next Meeting

I. Ms. Carolyn Brittin, TCEQ, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and welcomed all those in attendance. There was a brief discussion of the logistical support and arrangements for the meeting before addressing the issue selecting a chair (or spokesperson) for the Committee.

II. Members of the Committee introduced themselves and provided a brief background on their experiences and interests that are related to the topics to be considered by the Committee. Ms. Brittin also introduced staff support to be provided by the TCEQ, TWDB, and TPWD. Legislative staff were also identified and introduced.

III. Ms. Brittin described options available for conducting the Committee meetings and it was decided to have TCEQ staff facilitate the meetings and select a Chair (Spokesperson) to interact and coordinate with the support staff and serve as spokesperson on behalf of the Committee. The Chair will also work with the agency staff to help identify materials necessary to assist the Committee with completing their assigned tasks. Dr. Bob Brandes, RJBrandes Co., was selected Chair by consent.

IV. Committee members approved the agenda as written, but suggested that certain items should be expanded to include sub-topics (i.e. workplan discussion should include drafting of a “report” outline.)

V. The majority of the meeting was spent discussing the charges provided to the Committee and the time lines for completing their tasks.

- Brittin-- The Study Commission would like to review (...and approve) the final draft workplan prepared by the Committee. They would also like to see any changes proposed to the Committee charges.
- Harris-- Wanted to know if the Committee’s final recommendations included conducting studies, would there be funding available... (No)
- Harris-- Asked about the time lines for preparation of the draft wkpln. and when it would be presented to the SC. And, he asked about the schedule for completion of the

Committee's final report (31 August). He also suggested the workplan be a dynamic document which could be adjusted based on evolving circumstances. Dr. Harris wanted to know if the NAS review of the instream flow study methodology would be available for Committee consideration. [The current schedule set by NAS states the FINAL report will be completed by the end of October and no draft will be available prior to that time.] Dr. Harris has requested TWDB to query NAS about the possibility of obtaining a draft copy of the report for use by the Committee [Barney Austin will followup with that.]

- Dr. Harris also suggested the charges provided by the SC could be interpreted by some as “long-term” and may require additional work (follow up) beyond the life of the Committee.
- Dr. Brandes suggested the Committee needs to address the first two charges, will have to be provided by the three resource agencies. [Committee members agreed this could be accomplished through a workshop conducted by the Agencies.]
- Mathis-- Suggested after reviewing the condensed set of charges and those submitted by members of the SC, they could all be placed under two categories: 1. The science behind environmental flow needs; and 2. How can the environmental flow recommendations be implemented?
- Taylor-- Suggested the Committee might want to focus on the public policy of environmental flows rather than the science, however several members disagreed and said the focus of this effort should scientific basis for environmental flows.
- Landry-- Raised the issue of “implementation” of any flow recommendations. Mr. Landry stated several states were struggling with how to fit environmental flows into the overall scheme of water resource management.
- Shellman-- Mr. Shellman indicated the draft time line established for the Committee's work was unrealistic, and any solutions/recommendations developed by the Committee could be different for each basin, thus the need for an “adaptive management” approach.
- Montagna-- Stated the time would not allow for an exhaustive analysis of the science, and any product of the Committee should be succinct and non-technical in nature. Committee should also consider how other states and countries have addressed this issue. The Committee must be able to “translate” science into common sense recommendations.
- Questions: 1. What is the state of the hydrology in Texas? [include a description of the databases and capabilities of the resource agencies in defining/describing hydrology.] 2. How does the state assess environmental flow needs?
- Brandes-- Suggests laying out options(recommendations) developed through the Committee's deliberations and then provide a list of Pro's and Con's for each of the options.

- Harris-- Suggested the Committee might want to consider the social, economic, and cultural issues associated with environmental flows.
- Montagna-- Asked the question: Should the Committee consider the “need” for environmental flows, since this question appeared on more than one of the letters submitted to the SC as a possible charge to the Committee. Dr. Ward felt this was “implicit” in the #3 charge provided by the SC.
- Montagna-- Asked that a draft of the Committee report outline be completed at this meeting to provide members with a better idea on contents and expected final products.

VI. The Committee moved forward with recommendations to schedule a workshop (May 21, at 9:00 a.m, Capitol Complex) and suggested the three resource agencies would be responsible for providing materials for the meeting. Topical areas would include: 1. Role and involvement of the 3 agencies; 2. Existing hydrological conditions--current status, description of any known problems; and, 3. Analytical tools/methodologies available for flow assessment. There was some discussion about identifying policy options that could influence implementation. And, the idea of having an overview of the NAS process was also added.

#### Outline for the Report–

- I. Baseline Hydrology
- II. Baseline Biology (environmental conditions)
- III. Analytical Assessment Tools--Evaluation
  - a. Instream flows and B&E freshwater inflows
  - b. Tools for achieving target
  - c. Analysis of other activities outside Texas
  - d. indicators--what are they and how should they be measured?
  - e. ID watersheds with potential environmental flow management
  - f. Infrastructure for implementing management strategies
- IV. Implementation Options--Pro’s and Con’s
- V. Outcomes under various Policies

Dr. Brandes agreed to work with TCEQ support staff and the other two agencies, in preparing the agenda for the workshop, drafting the outline for the workplan, and preparing the initial outline for the Committee’s final report.

VII. The Workshop has been tentatively scheduled for May 21, beginning at 9 a.m., at the Capitol complex. The Committee also set June 11th as a tentative date their next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

## Summary Decisions

The committee elected Bob Brandes as Chair to act as the spokesperson for the Committee. Carolyn Brittin, TCEQ, will facilitate committee meetings. TCEQ staff will provide administrative support. TCEQ, TPWD, and TWDB will provide technical support and information as needed.

The committee was generally in agreement with the proposed charges as presented. They would like to ensure the charges include evaluation of implementation options for providing environmental flows, to include a pro/con analysis of each option.

The committee also developed a draft outline of their report to the SC and decided to include it in their workplan. They also decided to hold a workshop in May 21st to receive information and presentations from staff of the three resource agencies. A list of information they would like to obtain was developed.

Meetings of the SAC will not occur more frequently than every 3 weeks.

Members can consult with and obtain feedback/background information from any interested party throughout the SAC process.

## Action Items

1. TWDB to request a confidential copy of NAS draft report on the State's Instream Flow methodology.
2. Dr. Brandes and Carolyn Brittin will draft a strawman workplan to include proposed charges, schedule, and report outline as per discussion at 4/30/04 meeting. The draft will be sent w/in week to 10 days to SAC.
3. Members to review and provide comments on the draft wkpln. before the May 21st wkshp.
4. Agency staff will incorporate list of info/presentations requested by the SAC into a proposed agenda for the May 21st wkshp. The draft agenda will be provided w/in a week for review and comment by members.
5. SAC members will be provided a summary of the current B&E studies (via email-TWDB).